

## NOTES ON MICRO-HYDROPHILIDAE

By C. DEANE

During his visit to the Upper Williams River and Barrington Tops, New South Wales, with the party of naturalists that explored that region in October, 1926, Mr. Charles Barrett discovered a new species of *Hydrobius*, which is now described herein. The genus, with its allies, is almost world-wide in its distribution.

I have specimens from England, Belgium, U.S.A., Canada, Japan, Philippine Islands, Hawaii, Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia; but comparatively few have been named from Australia; they were described by Lea, Blackburn and Macleay.

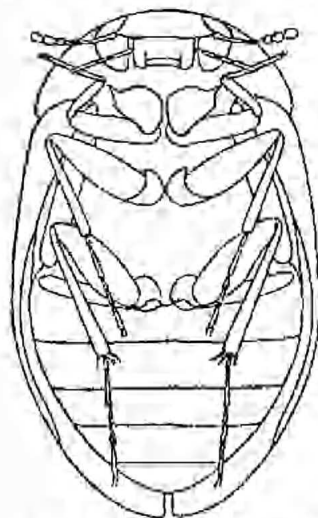


Fig. 1. *Hydrobius barretti*,  
n. sp.

The features which distinguish *Hydrobius* from its allies are: metasternum not prolonged into a spine, tarsi (feet) not compressed, and last joint of maxillary palpi longer than the third. The beetles of the family Hydrophilidae are mostly water-loving insects, and prefer fresh water. I am not acquainted with any species inhabiting waters of so great a salinity as that of the ocean. Perhaps none exist. Some, however, are content with water having a much greater proportion of dissolved minerals than is ordinarily found in fresh waters of the class that would be suitable for drinking purposes.

Among these waters of slightly increased salinity are the famous "Rock Pools" of Europe, which have yet to be discovered in Australia. They should be found in coastal situations sufficiently removed from tidal influence to prevent contact with the sea, but close enough to permit contamination by the air-borne salts, as carried in by mists and fine spray during high winds. They are thus rainwater pools which have had their salinity increased in the manner suggested. Any discoveries by readers of the *Victorian Naturalist* of pools answering to this description would be welcomed by specialists in freshwater ecology.

The chief town water supplies of the capital cities of the world vary in their solid constituency from three or four grains per gallon up to forty or fifty, while the sea contains something of the order of 2,300 grains per gallon. Waters commonly termed

"brackish" derive their salinity from direct contact with "salt" water; but in the case of "rock pools" there is no contact except

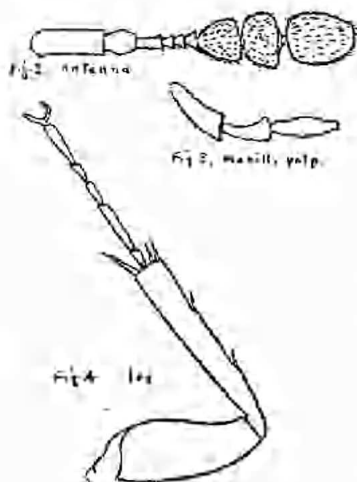
through the air. Some members of the genus *Ochthobius* are disposed to adapt themselves to waters of this kind, while *Phylhydrus*, as far as known at present, confines its attention to the true fresh waters.

*Hydrobius barretti*, n. sp. (Figs. 1 to 4). Oval, highly convex, scarcely nitid, light walnut brown. Head rather broad, only slightly produced, light brown, opaque, finely subrugose. Clypeus broadly rounded in front. Eyes below average size, deeply set, dark brown. Antennae 9-segmented, brown; last 3 segments pubescent. Palpi short, terminal segment just longer than preceding. Promotum broad, concolorous with elytra. Scutellum small. Elytra finely striate-punctate. Legs medium, brown.

Length, 3.56 mm. Width, 2.23 mm.

Habitat: Barrington Tops, New South Wales (C. Barrett).

Type in coll. Wilson, cotype and Canada balsam slides in coll. Deane.



Figs. 2 to 4.

#### THE HONEY FLORA OF VICTORIA

The Department of Agriculture has recently published the third edition of this handbook which was first compiled in 1922 by the late F. R. Beattie, a Club member. The present edition has been revised and amplified by the officers of the Department in conjunction with the staff of the National Herbarium, and has been enlarged to 136 pages. Whilst it has been produced primarily for the use of apiculturists, field naturalists will find it of considerable value as an aid to the identification of many plants, particularly in connection with the Victorian species of Eucalypts, of which 58 are figured and 77 described. The figures of 45 other plants are included and 80 species are described. The descriptions are not strictly botanical but are written in a popular style with the main points of identification stressed and even the novice should have no difficulty in separating the species or varieties listed. The period of blossoming is given in every case, together with economic details in regard to timber, essential oils and honey flow. The habitats and geographic range is also very comprehensive. Previous editions of this work have been popular amongst naturalists and they will find the present issue of still greater value. Copies may be obtained from the Department of Agriculture or the Government Printer at 1/6 per copy.

G.N.H.